



## THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

**FHPS POLICY K-00-2**

**KNOX BOX REQUIREMENTS AND  
PROCEDURE FOR ORDERING  
UFC 902.4**

### ***I. PURPOSE***

This policy is intended to provide information about Knox-keyed devices and how to obtain them.

### ***II. SCOPE***

This policy shall apply to all buildings or sites within the City of San Diego where it has been determined that a Knox-keyed device is needed to improve accessibility for emergency responders.

### ***III. OVERVIEW***

The Knox Program provides San Diego Fire and Life Safety Services with a quick and easy means to access a secured building or area. It also minimizes potential costly repairs caused by forcible entry and allows the building to be re-secured quickly and easily.

### ***IV. DEFINITIONS***

Knox Company: The manufacturer and seller of Knox boxes, cabinets, key switches, padlocks, and related accessories. This is the only company whose products can be opened by San Diego Fire and Life Safety Services.

Knox Key: A key carried on all fire apparatus which enables fire crews to access any Knox device within the City of San Diego.

Knox Box: A lock box used for securely storing the keys to a gate, building, or rooms within a building.

Knox Cabinet: A locked data cabinet used for storing information pertinent to the operation of a building, such as Hazmat data and plant shut-down procedures. Keys to the facility can also be located within the cabinet.



### **Fire and Hazard Prevention**

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Knox Key Switch: An electrical switch activated by a Knox key which opens a gate or garage door.

Knox Padlock: A heavy padlock openable by a Knox key.

Keytag: Attached to each key in a Knox box to identify its function.

### ***V. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS***

When access to secured structures or areas is difficult for emergency responders, the Chief is authorized to require a Knox box to be installed in an acceptable location. This location is usually within ten feet of the main entrance to the building, positioned at a height of approximately seven feet above floor level. Other locations or devices may be considered when conditions warrant and upon Departmental review.

### ***VI HOW TO ORDER***

Once the need for a Knox Box or other Knox product has been established, the customer will be given this policy, a Knox company brochure, and a Knox product order form with price list. These will be given to the customer by either the engine company or Fire and Hazard Prevention Services personnel. This information can also be mailed to the customer upon request, or sent by FAX.

The customer should review this information and make his/her selection on the order form. If the customer needs assistance in selecting the appropriate product, he/she may contact the Knox company and obtain the assistance of a sales representative. Once the selection has been made, the completed order form and payment should be sent to the Knox company. The Knox company will ship the order directly to the address given on the order form.

### ***VII INSTALLATION***

It is the customer's responsibility to ensure that Knox products are installed securely in an approved location and manner. Knox boxes may need to be anchored to the building with lag bolts, recessed into plaster or stucco, or welded to metal fences, posts, or gates.

One "Fire Department" Alert Decal is included with each Knox box. The decal is to be mounted on the door or door frame adjacent to the Knox box. This decal alerts Fire Companies to the presence of a Knox box.

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Knox key switches should be installed by an electrician familiar with these devices. They should be located in an accessible location. The preferred location for mounting is in the gate control head or in a single-gang electrical switch box.

### ***VIII KEYS IN KNOX BOXES***

Every key being placed in a Knox box must be identified with a sturdy tag. Each set of keys shall be grouped together on a key ring. Tags and key rings may be purchased from the Knox company at the time the Knox box is ordered. The keys being installed will be at the discretion of the customer, but should be selected bearing in mind the access needs of responding fire companies. Some keys typically placed in Knox boxes include: MAIN ENTRANCE, GRAND MASTER, ELEVATOR CONTROL, MECHANICAL ROOM, FIRE ALARM PANEL, ELECTRICAL ROOM, AND ROOF ACCESS.

### ***IX LOCK UP OF KNOX BOX***

Knox boxes are shipped to the customer in the OPEN position. After the box has been installed, the customer must contact Fire and Hazard Prevention Services to request lock-up since only the Department has a key. Fire and Hazard Prevention Services will contact the customer and arrange for the lock-up to take place. This may take some time, depending on the availability of both parties.

All keys should be tagged and ready for placement in the Knox box when the Engine Company arrives.

### ***X TESTING OF KEYSWITCH***

After a keyswitch has been installed, the customer must contact Fire and Hazard Prevention Services. The local Engine Company will then be notified. The company will test the keyswitch at its earliest convenience to ensure that it works properly. The customer does not need to be present for this test. If the key switch fails to operate, the customer will be contacted to have the necessary repairs made.

### ***XI NUMBER OF KEY SETS REQUIRED***

More than one set of keys is often required, especially in larger buildings. These extra sets are needed for the additional Fire Companies subsequently arriving at the same address. It is common procedure to dispatch one Truck Company and three Engine Companies to



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each First Alarm response for a commercial building or multiple unit residential building.

Second and Greater Alarm responses will increase the number of Fire Companies accordingly. The following guidelines for number of key sets shall be followed:

Security Gate only, or

1-story building:	1 set
2-3 stories:	2 sets
4-8 stories:	3 sets
9-15 stories:	4 sets
16-20 stories:	5 sets
21+ stories:	10 sets

NOTE: A larger box will be required if several sets of keys or cards are to be stored in the box.

Promulgated by: \_\_\_\_\_ [signed] \_\_\_\_\_ Date: 3/2/2000

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